

Serial Number: 09/734,721

Group Art Unit: 2874

MARKED-UP VERSION OF AMENDMENTS

IN THE CLAIMS:

New claims 12-26 have been added.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

The abstract has been replaced by a new abstract.

REMARKS

By the present amendment, new claims 12-26 have been added and the abstract has been replaced by a shortened abstract.

Support for the new claims is found in the original claims. Specifically, support for claim 12 is found in original claim 1 and on page 23, lines 15-17, support for claim 13 is found in original claims 1-2 and 9 and on page 15, lines 11-13, support for claims 14-22 and 26 is found in original claims 2-10 and 11, and support for claims 23-25 is found in the paragraph bridging pages 15-16.

Claims 1-26 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-10 and 12-25 are directed to a plane light source and claims 11 and 26 are directed to a liquid-crystal display device.

In the Office Action, the abstract is objected to as too long.

The abstract has been replaced by a shortened abstract. Accordingly, it is submitted that the objection should be withdrawn.

Next, in the Office Action, claims 1-4 and 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by US 5,835,661 to Tai et al. (Tai), and claims 5-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Tai in view of US 5,727,107 to Umemoto et al. (Umemoto).

The rejection is respectfully traversed. It is submitted that no *prima facie* case of obviousness has been made. There would have been no motivation to modify the refractive indices of the optical elements in Tai as alleged in the Office Action, because, contrary to the interpretation in the Office Action, Tai does not identify a problem of light rays having a large

incidence angle at the interface between the linear light guide and the plane light guide. Specifically, a main objective of the linear light guide of Tai is to collimate light within the linear light guide so that light rays incident on the interface with the plane light guide have a small angle with respect to the normal (see in particular Tai at col. 6, lines 46-52). Thus, Tai does not attempt to transmit all light rays irrespective of the incidence angle. If anything, Tai would provide a motivation to reflect light rays having large incidence angles at the interface rather than transmitting them to the plane light guide, so that the incidence angle could be reduced to obtain collimated light. As a result, Tai fails to provide any motivation to improve transmission of light rays having a large incidence angle at the interface between the linear and plane light guides.

Further, there is no suggestion in Tai that modifying the refractive indices of the linear and plane light guides would result in an image quality enhancement. Instead, Tai provides a clear teaching that the materials of the various optical elements should be the same (see Tai at col. 13, lines 40-41 and col. 14, lines 19-20). Thus, a person of the art would have found no guidance in Tai as to whether modifying the refractive indices of the various optical elements would improve or deteriorate image quality. As a result, a person of the art would not have been motivated to modify Tai as alleged in the Office Action.

For at least the reasons stated above, the present claims are not obvious over Tai.

In addition, with respect to claim 9, Tai fails to teach or suggest inclined ridgelines as recited in present claim 9. Therefore, for this reason alone, claim 9 and claims 13-26 which include this feature are not obvious over Tai.

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In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejection should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

In the event there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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